

Practice Test E – Reading

Question 1- 7

Hotels were among the earliest facilities that bound the United States together. They were both creatures and creators of communities, as well symptoms of the frenetic quest for community. Even in the first part of the nineteenth century, Americans were already forming the habit of gathering from all corners of the nation for both public and private, business and pleasure, purposes. Conventions were the new occasions, and hotels were distinctively American facilities making conventions possible. The first national convention of a major party to choose a candidate for President (that of the National Republican party, which met on December 12, 1831, and nominated Henry Clay for President) was held in Baltimore, at a hotel that was then reputed to be the best in the country. The presence in Baltimore of Barnum's City Hotel, a six-story building with two hundred apartments, helps explain why many other early national political conventions were held there.

In the longer run, American hotels made other national conventions not only possible but pleasant and convivial. The growing custom of regularly assembling from afar the representatives of all kinds of groups – not only for political conventions, but also for commercial, professional, learned, and avocations ones – in turn supported the multiplying hotels. By the mid-twentieth century, conventions accounted for over a third of the yearly room occupancy of all hotels in the nation; about eighteen thousand different conventions were held annually with a total attendance of about ten million persons.

Nineteenth-century American hotelkeepers, who were no longer the genial, deferential "hosts" of the eighteenth-century European inn, became leading citizens. Holding a large stake in the community, they exercised power to make it prosper. As owners or managers of the local "palace of the public," they were makers and shapers of a principal community attraction. Travelers from abroad were mildly shocked by this high social position.

1. The word "bound" in line 1 is closest in meaning to
 - (A) led
 - (B) protected
 - (C) tied
 - (D) strengthened
2. The National Republican party is mentioned in line 8 as an example of a group
 - (A) from Baltimore
 - (B) of learned people
 - (C) owning a hotel
 - (D) holding a convention

3. The word "assembling" in line 14 is closest in meaning to
- (A) announcing
 - (B) motivating
 - (C) gathering
 - (D) contracting
4. The word "ones" in line 16 refers to
- (A) hotels
 - (B) conventions
 - (C) kinds
 - (D) representatives
5. The word "it" in line 23 refers to
- (A) European inn
 - (B) host
 - (C) community
 - (D) public
6. It can be inferred from the passage that early hotelkeepers in the United States were
- (A) active politicians
 - (B) European immigrants
 - (C) professional builders
 - (D) influential citizens
7. Which of the following statements about early American hotels is NOT mentioned in the passage?
- (A) Travelers from abroad did not enjoy staying in them.
 - (B) Conventions were held in them.
 - (C) People used them for both business and pleasure.
 - (D) They were important to the community

Questions 8-17

Line
(5) Beads were probably the first durable ornaments humans possessed, and the intimate relationship they had with their owners is reflected in the fact that beads are among the most common items found in ancient archaeological sites. In the past, as today, men, women, and children adorned themselves with beads. In some cultures still, certain beads are often worn from birth until death, and then are buried with their owners for the afterlife. Abrasion due to daily wear alters the surface features of beads, and if they are buried for long, the effects of corrosion can further change their appearance. Thus, interest is imparted to the bead both by use and the effects of time.

(10) Besides their wearability, either as jewelry or incorporated into articles of attire, beads possess the desirable characteristics of every collectible: they are durable, portable, available in infinite variety, and often valuable in their original cultural context as well as in today's market. Pleasing to look at and touch, beads come in shapes, colors, and materials that almost compel one to handle them and to sort them.

(15) Beads are miniature bundles of secrets waiting to be revealed: their history, manufacture, cultural context, economic role, and ornamental use are all points of information one hopes to unravel. Even the most mundane beads may have traveled great distances and been exposed to many human experiences. The bead researcher must gather information from many diverse fields. In addition to having to be a generalist while specializing in what may seem to be a narrow field, the researcher is

(20) faced with the problem of primary materials that have little or no documentation. Many ancient beads that are of ethnographic interest have often been separated from their original cultural context.

(25) The special attractions of beads contribute to the uniqueness of bead research. While often regarded as the "small change of civilizations," beads are a part of every culture, and they can often be used to date archaeological sites and to designate the degree of mercantile, technological, and cultural sophistication.

8. What is the main subject of the passage?

- (A) Materials used in making beads
- (B) How beads are made
- (C) The reasons for studying beads
- (D) Different types of beads

9. The word "adorned" in line 4 is closest in meaning to

- (A) protected
- (B) decorated
- (C) purchased
- (D) enjoyed

10. The word "attire" in line 9 is Closest in meaning to

- (A) ritual
- (B) importance
- (C) clothing
- (D) history

11. All of the following are given as characteristics of collectible objects EXCEPT

- (A) durability
- (B) portability
- (C) value
- (D) scarcity

12. According to the passage, all of the following are factors that make people want to touch beads EXCEPT the
- (A) shape
 - (B) color
 - (C) material
 - (D) odor
13. The word "unravel" in line 16 is closest in meaning to
- (A) communicate
 - (B) transport
 - (C) improve
 - (D) discover
14. The word "mundane" in line 16 is closest in meaning to
- (A) carved
 - (B) beautiful
 - (C) ordinary
 - (D) heavy
15. It is difficult to trace the history of certain ancient beads because they
- (A) are small in size
 - (B) have been buried underground
 - (C) have been moved from their original locations
 - (D) are frequently lost
16. Knowledge of the history of some beads may be useful in the studies done by which of the following?
- (A) Anthropologist
 - (B) Agricultural experts
 - (C) Medical researchers
 - (D) Economists
17. Where in the passage does the author describe why the appearance beads may change?
- (A) Lines 3-4
 - (B) Lines 6-8
 - (C) Lines 12-13
 - (D) Lines 20-22

Questions 18-31

In the world of birds, bill design is a prime example of evolutionary fine-tuning. Shorebirds such as oystercatchers use their bills to pry open the tightly sealed shells of their prey; hummingbirds have stiletto-like bills to probe the deepest nectar-bearing flowers; and kiwis smell out earthworms thanks to nostrils located at the tip of their beaks. But few birds are more intimately tied to their source of sustenance than are crossbills. Two species of these finches, named for the way the upper and lower parts of their bills cross, rather than meet in the middle, reside in the evergreen forests of North America and feed on the seeds held within the cones of coniferous trees.

The efficiency of the bill is evident when a crossbill locates a cone. Using a lateral motion of its lower mandible, the bird separates two overlapping scales on the cone and exposes the seed. The crossed mandibles enable the bird to exert a powerful biting force at the bill tips, which is critical for maneuvering them between the scales and spreading the scales apart. Next, the crossbill snakes its long tongue into the gap and draws out the seed. Using the combined action of the bill and tongue, the bird cracks open and discards the woody seed covering and swallows the nutritious inner kernel. This whole process takes but a few seconds and is repeated hundreds of times a day.

The bills of different crossbill species and subspecies vary – some are stout and deep, others more slender and shallow. As a rule, large-billed crossbills are better at securing seeds from large cones, while small-billed crossbills are more deft at removing the seeds from small, thin-scaled cones. Moreover, the degree to which cones are naturally slightly open or tightly closed helps determine which bill design is the best.

One anomaly is the subspecies of red crossbill known as the Newfoundland crossbill. This bird has a large, robust bill, yet most of Newfoundland's conifers have small cones, the same kind of cones that the slender-billed white-wings rely on.

18. What does the passage mainly discuss?
- (A) The importance of conifers in evergreen forests
 - (B) The efficiency of the bill of the crossbill
 - (C) The variety of food available in a forest
 - (D) The different techniques birds use to obtain food

19. Which of the following statements best represents the type of "evolutionary fine-tuning" mentioned in line 1?
- (A) Different shapes of bills have evolved depending on the available food supply.
 - (B) White-wing crossbars have evolved from red crossbills.
 - (C) Newfoundland's conifers have evolved small cones.
 - (D) Several subspecies of crossbills have evolved from two species.

20. Why does the author mention oystercatchers, hummingbirds, and kiwis in lines 2-4?

- (A) They are examples of birds that live in the forest.
- (B) Their beaks are similar to the beak of the crossbill.
- (C) They illustrate the relationship between bill design and food supply.
- (D) They are closely related to the crossbill.

21. Crossbills are a type of

- (A) shorebird
- (B) hummingbird
- (C) kiwi
- (D) finch

22. Which of the following most closely resembles the bird described in lines 6-8?

(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)



23. The word "which" in line 12 refers to
- (A) seed
 - (B) bird
 - (C) force
 - (D) bill
24. The word "gap" in line 13 is closest in meaning to
- (A) opening
 - (B) flower
 - (C) mouth
 - (D) tree
25. The word "discards" in line 15 is closest in meaning to
- (A) eats
 - (B) breaks
 - (C) finds out
 - (D) gets rid of
26. The word "others" in line 18 refers to
- (A) bills
 - (B) species
 - (C) seeds
 - (D) cones
27. The word "deft" in line 19 is closest in meaning to
- (A) hungry
 - (B) skilled
 - (C) tired
 - (D) pleasant
28. The word "robust" in line 24 is closest in meaning to
- (A) strong
 - (B) colorful
 - (C) unusual
 - (D) sharp
29. In what way is the Newfoundland crossbill an anomaly?
- (A) It is larger than the other crossbill species.
 - (B) It uses a different technique to obtain food.
 - (C) The size of its bill does not fit the size of its food source.
 - (D) It does not live in evergreen forests.
30. The final paragraph of the passage will probably continue with a discussion of
- (A) other species of forest birds
 - (B) the fragile ecosystem of Newfoundland
 - (C) what mammals live in the forests of North America
 - (D) how the Newfoundland crossbill survives with a large bill
31. Where in the passage does the author describe how a crossbill removed a seed from its cone?
- (A) The first paragraph
 - (B) The second paragraph
 - (C) The third paragraph
 - (D) The fourth paragraph

Questions 32-38

Line (5) If you look closely at some of the early copies of the Declaration of Independence, beyond the flourished signature of John Hancock and the other fifty-five men who signed it, you will also find the name of one woman, Mary Katherine Goddard. It was she, a Baltimore printer, who published the first official copies of the Declaration, the first copies that included the names of its signers and therefore heralded the support of all thirteen colonies.

(10) Mary Goddard first got into printing at the age of twenty-four when her brother opened a printing shop in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1762. When he proceeded to get into trouble with his partners and creditors, it was Mary Goddard and her mother who were left to run the shop. In 1765 they began publishing the *Providence Gazette*, a weekly newspaper. Similar problems seemed to follow her brother as he opened businesses in Philadelphia and again in Baltimore. Each time Ms. Goddard was brought in to run the newspapers. After starting Baltimore's first newspaper, *The Maryland Journal*, in 1773, her brother went broke trying to organize a colonial postal service. While he was in debtor's prison, Mary Katherine Goddard's name appeared on the newspaper's masthead for the first time.

(15) When the Continental Congress fled there from Philadelphia in 1776, it commissioned Ms. Goddard to print the first official version of the Declaration of Independence in January 1777. After printing the documents, she herself paid the post riders to deliver the Declaration throughout the colonies.

(20) During the American Revolution, Mary Goddard continued to publish Baltimore's only newspaper, which one historian claimed was "second to none among the colonies." She was also the city's Postmaster from 1775 to 1789 – appointed by Benjamin Franklin – and is considered to be the first woman to hold a federal position.

32. With which of the following subjects is the passage mainly concerned?
- (A) The accomplishments of a female publisher
 - (B) The weaknesses of the newspaper industry
 - (C) The rights of a female publisher
 - (D) The publishing system in colonial America

33. Mary Goddard's name appears on the Declaration of Independence because
- (A) she helped write the original document
 - (B) she published the document
 - (C) she paid to have the document printed
 - (D) her brother was in prison

34. The word "heralded" in line 5 is closest in meaning to
- (A) influenced
 - (B) announced
 - (C) rejected
 - (D) ignored
35. According to the passage, Mary Goddard first became involved in publishing when she
- (A) was appointed by Benjamin Franklin
 - (B) signed the Declaration of Independence
 - (C) took over her brother's printing shop
 - (D) moved to Baltimore
36. The word "there" in line 17 refers to
- (A) the colonies
 - (B) the print shop
 - (C) Baltimore
 - (D) Providence
37. It can be inferred from the passage that Mary Goddard was
- (A) an accomplished businesswoman
 - (B) extremely wealthy
 - (C) a member of the Continental congress
 - (D) a famous writer
38. The word "position" in line 24 is closest in meaning to
- (A) job
 - (B) election
 - (C) document
 - (D) location

Question 39-50

Galaxies are the major building blocks of the universe. A galaxy is a giant family of many millions of stars, and it is held together by its own gravitational field. Most of the material universe is organized into galaxies of stars, together with gas and dust.

Line There are three main types of galaxy: spiral, elliptical, and irregular. The Milky
(5) Way is a spiral galaxy: a flattish disc of star with two spiral arms emerging from its central nucleus. About one-quarter of all galaxies have this shape. Spiral galaxies are well supplied with the interstellar gas in which new stars form; as the rotating spiral pattern sweeps around the galaxy it compresses gas and dust, triggering the formation of bright young stars in its arms. The elliptical galaxies have a symmetrical elliptical or
(10) spheroidal shape with no obvious structure. Most of their member stars are very old and since ellipticals are devoid of interstellar gas, no new stars are forming in them. The biggest and brightest galaxies in the universe are ellipticals with masses of about 10^{13} times that of the Sun; these giants may frequently be sources of strong radio emission, in which case they are called radio galaxies. About two-thirds of all galaxies
(15) are elliptical. Irregular galaxies comprise about one-tenth of all galaxies and they come in many subclasses.

Measurement in space is quite different from measurement on Earth. Some terrestrial distances can be expressed as intervals of time: the time to fly from one continent to another or the time it takes to drive to work, for example. By comparison
(20) with these familiar yardsticks, the distances to the galaxies are incomprehensibly large, but they too are made more manageable by using a time calibration, in this case, the distance that light travels in one year. On such a scale the nearest giant spiral galaxy, the Andromeda galaxy, is two million light years away. The most distant luminous objects seen by telescopes are probably ten thousand million light years away. Their
(25) light was already halfway here before the Earth even formed. The light from the nearby Virgo galaxy set out when reptiles still dominated the animal world.

39. The word "major" in line 1 is closest in meaning to
- (A) intense
 - (B) principal
 - (C) huge
 - (D) unique
40. What does the second paragraph mainly discuss?
- (A) The Milky Way
 - (B) Major categories of galaxies
 - (C) How elliptical galaxies are formed
 - (D) Differences between irregular and spiral galaxies
41. The word "which" in line 7 refers to
- (A) dust
 - (B) gas
 - (C) pattern
 - (D) galaxy
42. According to the passage, new stars are formed in spiral galaxies due to
- (A) an explosion of gas
 - (B) the compression of gas and dust
 - (C) the combining of old stars
 - (D) strong radio emissions

43. The word "symmetrical" in line 9 is closest in meaning to
- (A) proportionally balanced
 - (B) commonly seen
 - (C) typically large
 - (D) steadily growing
44. The word "obvious" in line 10 is closest in meaning to
- (A) discovered
 - (B) apparent
 - (C) understood
 - (D) simplistic
45. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT true of elliptical galaxies?
- (A) They are the largest galaxies.
 - (B) They mostly contain old stars.
 - (C) They contain a high amount of interstellar gas.
 - (D) They have a spherical shape.
46. Which of the following characteristics of radio galaxies is mentioned in the passage?
- (A) They are a type of elliptical galaxy.
 - (B) They are usually too small to be seen with a telescope.
 - (C) They are closely related to irregular galaxies.
 - (D) They are not as bright as spiral galaxies.
47. What percentage of galaxies is irregular?
- (A) 10%
 - (B) 25%
 - (C) 50%
 - (D) 75%
48. The word "they" in line 21 refers to
- (A) intervals
 - (B) yardsticks
 - (C) distances
 - (D) galaxies
49. Why does the author mention the Virgo galaxy and the Andromeda galaxy in the third paragraph?
- (A) To describe the effect that distance has on visibility
 - (B) To compare the ages of two relatively young galaxies
 - (C) To emphasize the vast distances of the galaxies from Earth
 - (D) To explain why certain galaxies cannot be seen by a telescope
50. The word "dominated" in line 26 is closest in meaning to
- (A) threatened
 - (B) replaced
 - (C) were developing in
 - (D) were prevalent in

Practice Test E – Answers

Question Number	Answer	Level of Difficulty	Answered Correctly
1	C	M	75%
2	D	M	78%
3	C	M	75%
4	B	D	57%
5	C	D	50%
6	D	D	52%
7	A	E	84%
8	C	M	72%
9	B	M	66%
10	C	D	50%
11	D	E	83%
12	D	E	91%
13	D	M	65%
14	C	M	58%
15	C	M	70%
16	A	M	71%
17	B	M	74%
18	B	M	65%
19	A	M	69%
20	C	M	71%
21	D	D	51%
22	B	M	76%
23	C	D	49%
24	A	D	50%
25	D	M	53%
26	A	M	71%
27	B	E	79%
28	A	M	61%
29	C	D	46%
30	D	M	60%
31	B	M	66%
32	A	E	76%
33	B	M	67%
34	B	M	48%
35	C	E	73%
36	C	M	54%
37	A	M	51%
38	A	M	60%
39	B	M	69%
40	B	E	79%
41	B	M	64%
42	B	M	77%

43	A	M	65%
44	B	M	64%
45	C	M	55%
46	A	M	76%
47	A	M	77%
48	C	D	50%
49	C	M	56%
50	D	D	30%

